



An Abney Associates Tech Tips China vents outrage over U.S. cyberspying indictment

BEIJING — Outraged by U.S. cyberspying charges against members of a secretive Chinese military unit, China summoned the U.S. ambassador in Beijing for a dressing down, state media said Tuesday, and the [Defense Ministry blasted the U.S. accusations as hypocritical](#).

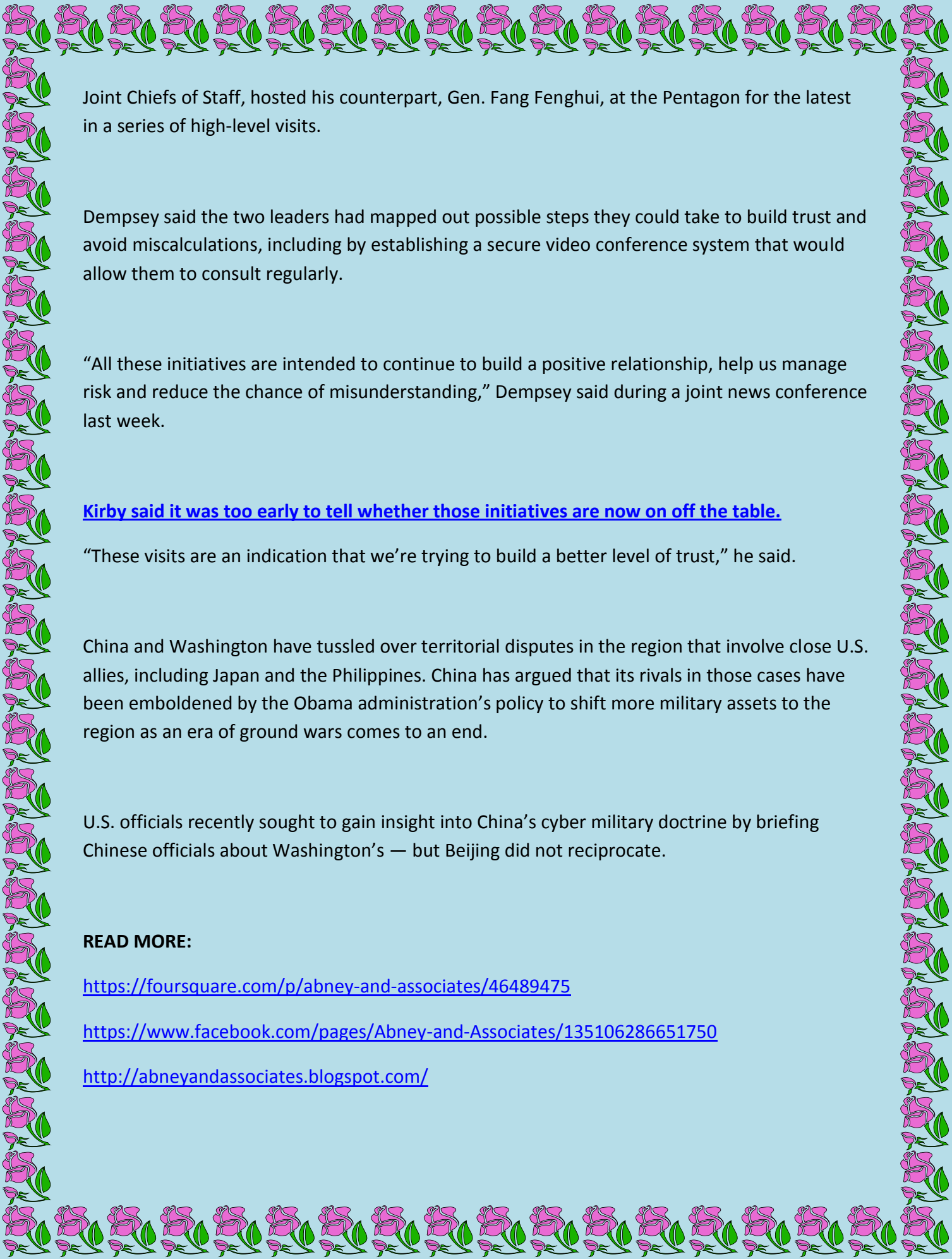
The government, meanwhile, published new statistics that it said showed massive cyberattacks on [China originating from the United States](#). “Those activities target Chinese leaders, ordinary citizens and anyone with a mobile phone,” the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported. “In the meantime, the U.S. repeatedly accuses China of spying and hacking.”

A day after the [U.S. Justice Department](#) unveiled explosive criminal cyber-espionage charges against five Chinese military officers, Beijing was still sputtering with indignation. Late Monday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry called the charges in a U.S. federal grand jury indictment “purely fictitious, extremely absurd.” China also announced it was suspending participation in the Sino-U.S. Cyber Working Group, formed to bridge differences over cyberspying.

The U.S. charges are certain to strain [Washington’s military](#) relationship with China, which the Pentagon made a concerted effort to build up in recent years. A Pentagon spokesman, Rear Adm. John Kirby, said Tuesday that the Defense Department had been aware of the impending charges and hoped that they would not stymie cooperation on various fronts.

“The degree to which this affects the relationship is up to the Chinese,” Kirby said, noting that Washington’s military relationship with Beijing has been built in “fits and starts.”

U.S. defense officials have portrayed the relationship in recent weeks as being on the upswing. Secretary of [Defense Chuck Hagel](#) visited Beijing for the first time in his current job last month and said he was heartened by the frank discussions he held with the country’s defense chiefs. Just days before the indictments were unsealed, Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the



Joint Chiefs of Staff, hosted his counterpart, Gen. Fang Fenghui, at the Pentagon for the latest in a series of high-level visits.

Dempsey said the two leaders had mapped out possible steps they could take to build trust and avoid miscalculations, including by establishing a secure video conference system that would allow them to consult regularly.

“All these initiatives are intended to continue to build a positive relationship, help us manage risk and reduce the chance of misunderstanding,” Dempsey said during a joint news conference last week.

[Kirby said it was too early to tell whether those initiatives are now on off the table.](#)

“These visits are an indication that we’re trying to build a better level of trust,” he said.

China and Washington have tussled over territorial disputes in the region that involve close U.S. allies, including Japan and the Philippines. China has argued that its rivals in those cases have been emboldened by the Obama administration’s policy to shift more military assets to the region as an era of ground wars comes to an end.

U.S. officials recently sought to gain insight into China’s cyber military doctrine by briefing Chinese officials about Washington’s — but Beijing did not reciprocate.

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